AMENDMENTS FOR THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method for searching a program guide database, comprising:

receiving, from service provider equipment, an interactive program guide (IPG) comprising a plurality of IPG pages conveyed by respective image streams, each of said IPG pages including a search object and a respective portion of IPG imagery;

receiving one or more search criteria via user interaction with said search object;

sending a request for a search along with the one or more search criteria to a head end of an information distribution system; and

receiving at least one or more search result results from the service provider equipment; head end, and

wherein the program guide database is searched at the service provider equipment head end.

2.   (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

displaying an interactive program guide (IPG) page having include therein at least one received search result.

3.   (original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

highlighting a channel object on the displayed IPG page corresponding to one received search result.

4.   (original) The method of claim 3, wherein the channel object is highlighted by placing a cursor on the channel object.

5.   (original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

receiving an indication that the highlighted channel object has been selected;

retrieving one or more streams associated with the selected channel object; and

decoding the one or more retrieved streams to recover a selected program.

6.   (original) The method of claim 5, wherein the highlighted channel object is selected by depressing a particular key on a remote control unit.

7.   (original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

receiving an indication to view a next search result; and

displaying an IPG page having included therein the next search result.

8.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more search results are provided within one or more search result IPG pages.

9.   (original) The method of claim 8, wherein the one or more search result IPG pages are received via one or more streams identified by respective packet identifiers (PIDs).

10.   (original) The method of claim 8, wherein the each search result IPG page includes only search results and no other program guide data.

11.   (original) The method of claim 8, wherein the one or more search results are provided in a particular order of relevance within the one or more search result IPG pages.

12.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more search results are received in an order based on scheduled show times.

13.   (original) The method of claim 12, wherein the search result having a scheduled show time closest to present time is provided first and the search result having a scheduled show time furthest from the present time is provided last.

14.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more search results are received as video slices generated via slice-based encoding and sent from the head end.

15.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more search results are received as out-of-band data from the head end.

16.   (original) The method of claim 15, wherein the one or more search results are received as compressed data.

17.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the program guide database includes a plurality of program entries for a plurality of channels for a particular time period.

18.   (original) The method of claim 17, wherein program data within the program guide database is indexed for ease of searching.

19.   (original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more search criteria comprise one or more keywords.

20.   (Currently Amended) An interactive program guide (IPG) page ~~composed and rendered at a head end and operable to support a search of a program guide database~~, comprising:

at least one guide region configurable to display a listing of a plurality of channels; and

a search window object configurable to receive one or more criteria for the search of the program guide database; wherein said IPG page is composed and rendered at a head end and operable to support a search of a program guide database.

21.   (original) The IPG page of claim 20, wherein the search window object is activated by moving a cursor over the object.

22.   (original) The IPG page of claim 20, wherein the search window object is activated by depressing a particular key on a remote control unit.

23.   (original) The IPG page of claim 20, wherein the at least one guide region is configurable to display a guide listing that includes a channel object corresponding to a search result from the search.

24.   (original) The IPG page of claim 20, wherein the search window object is composed as a video slice that is encoded via slice-base encoding.

25.   (original) The IPG page of claim 20, wherein the search window object is composed as a bitmap.

26.   (Currently Amended) A system including provider equipment and subscriber equipment operable to perform a search of a program guide database, comprising:
        a program guide source operative to store a program guide database at said provider equipment;
        a controller, coupled to the program guide source, and operative to receive a search request from said subscriber equipment that includes one or more search criteria, initiate the search of the program guide database based on the one or more search criteria, and provide one or more search results;

an encoding unit coupled to the controller and operative to encode the one or more search results; and

a cable modem coupled to the controller and the encoding unit and operative to receive the search request and to transmit the one or more encoded search results in a form of a program guide page from said provider equipment to said subscriber equipment.

27. (Currently Amended) A set top terminal (STT) operable to support a search of a program guide database, comprising:

a receiver, for receiving an interactive program guide (IPG) from associated service provider equipment, said IPG having an object for receiving search criteria associated with said program guide database;

a controller operative to receive one or more search criteria and generate a request for a search with the one or more criteria;

a modulator coupled to the controller and operative to send sent the request to the provider equipment of a head-end of an information distribution system;

a demodulator operative to receive a modulated signal and generate a transport stream;

a transport de-multiplexer coupled to the demodulator and operative to receive and process the transport stream to provide a plurality of elementary streams; and

a decoder coupled to the transport de-multiplexer and operative to process at least one elementary stream to retrieve one or more search results from the provider equipment head-end, and

wherein the program guide database is searched at the provider equipment head end.

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